Confidential

Dear Mrs Chester

Pictou N S June 29th 62

Permit me to address you in the endearing accents of friendship, rather than in those of stiff cold and formal business.

I feel as if I had a claim to your friendship, for although entirely unknown to you, yet I have heard of you, and by the instrumentality of the press have held sweet communion with your spirit.

I have been for the last sixteen years deeply interested in — may I not allow me to say, that my energies — my soul has been all engrossed by the glorious movement to which you have consecrated your powers — a movement destined not only to sweep from Earth the sum of all villainy, but to crumble in pieces Principalities and powers, Hierachies and Conventions, hoary despotisms political and ecclesiastical that have for centuries reduced mankind to serfdom and bondage, and kept them in that abject condition. Were I dwelling amongst you I would deem it a privelege to cast in my mite into your truly gospel treasury, but narrow circumstances great distance and isolated condition preclude that. Individual contributions under such circumstances must necessarily be so small as not to be worth sending. I have frequently endeavoured to enlist my neighbours in your holy cause. I have repeatedly tried to rouse them to the performance of what I considered their duty to the American bondman, but I am sorry to say to very little purpose.

When I would imagine that I was on the point of succeeding some demon would raise an evil report calculated to damage the reputation of the Abolitionists for orthodoxy, that quashes proceedings and drives me back to my original position. My husband and I, several years since, believed it to be our duty to withdraw from a corrupt church inefficient to remove evil, that excites their jealousy, makes them suspicious of us, they considering that we intend some sinister design on their creed, and treat their gods with disrespect.

The young Dawsons, who joined me last year in sending a trifle to your Bazaar had been in Scotland two years ago, and in Edinburgh met with some sterling abolitionists who reasoned so well with them as to convince them that it was their duty to aid the abolitionists, notwithstanding the heterodoxy of their opinions

57

I rejoiced at this not so much on account of any good our paltry contributions would do to advance the cause, as for the salutary effect it would have on ourselves. Has not the Abolition agitation done much for the Women of the United States? What would you all have been but for it, Amusing Yourselves with such toys as men would please to set before you, or "feasting the Parson with the Spare rib" while father, brother or husband would be looking at the desk. I never read a soul stirring article from the pen of one of your Woman, but I think what a powerfull engine the Antislavery reform has been in developing the mind of woman, but for that, would they ever have thought of demanding equal rights. The same instrumentality will yet rouse the women of Great Britain into a proper sense of their position, when they will lay aside childish toys and assume the bearing and attitude of rational beings and of free yet responsible agent and fulfill their high destiny. Oh Merciful Father how appalling to think of the work that will have to be accomplished by the Women of Europe before their guilty Land can be purged of all that crushes and dehumanizes man. We should never despond, Wendell Phillips says if I remember correctly, that the pulse of a god will yet beat down despotic thrones, but I fear their foundations will first have to be sapped by the blood of the brave and true. In Britian the Total abstenence reform will place its adherents in the same position with regard to the Sectarian Churches, in which Antislavery has placed you in respect of the American Church. Dr Wardlaw of Glasgow the Pope of a very influential body who think themselves Christians of high standing and unsullied purity, defending the drinking of good Wine on the ground that Jesus Christ made it, and gave it to the guests at the marriage feast even after they were considerably advanced towards intoxication. There is not a corner of the earth where man is more debased by intemperance than the City of Glasgow yet that hypocritical priest will not deny himself the use of wine for the sake of the thousands wrecks that lie scattered around him, nor yet for the sake of the master who he professes to serve. What can a man or woman of ordenary discernment think of such a one for a Spiritual guide, only that he is not the real honest sincere that he is a hypocrite and deciever assuming the cloak of sanctity for worldly advancement. But as they say in my Country "like a dog has his day" there will come an end to seeming some day, God speed it.

It is due to you that I should apologize for not writing to you in 1848 but

at the time I received your letter kindly offering to send me anti-slavery publications. I was much depressed in spirit at the time indeed so much so that I could not write. The cause of my depression was this, an unfortunate man who from all I could learn of his past life was I have no doubt a Monomaniac had committed a horrid murder for which he lay under sentence of death, and was finally hanged. My husband ~~and I~~ and I conceived it our duty to speak out against the life taking principle, I need not mention to you that we raised something of a hurricane about our ears. One man came over twenty miles just to look at us. he seemed much surprised to find we were "hard mixe like folks" he listened with patience to what we said in our defence and promised to read any thing on the subject that we might send him. I have never come across any thing that I could send him, I you would for confer a very great favour on me if you could send me a few tracts of on this subject. We were misrepresented and vilified to an extent of which you can scarcely form an idea, It was to us a time of trial. I might fill my paper with this matter but tis useless.

To be called infidel and atheist is very hard to bear. I am pouring out complaints because it is so agrable to find a kindred spirit that can understand me.

I intended writing when Miss I. D. sent the parcel last year, but a deal of work and a mortal hatred to committing my thoughts to writing must be my excuse. I wish in these days of discovery, some one would find out a more rapid mode of communicating thought to persons at a distance, than this old fashioned one of writing.

The blue and cry of infidelity raised in Scotland against the New England Abolitionists, has reached us, and affected the Dawsons's who belong to that sect of Dissenters called Morrisonians and therefore decline assisting in any form this year. I would feel very much indebted to you if you could send me a copy of Uncle Tom's Cabin from what I have heard of it, I think a reading of its contents would set them right again, the heart of some people must be reached through the medium of the nerves.

Some doubt the validity of appealing to the feelings, instead of, the judgment of mankind, but the course of Dickens disproves this, for he has effectively appealed to the feelings of the people of England. The satirical shafts which he levelled at the commercial educational system of England in his Nicholas Nickleby were the chief cause of breaking up

more than one school in Yorkshire. The wooden bowl in which the physic was mixed in Dotheboys Hall is now suspended as a curiosity in some public office. Perhaps you could procure one or two tins Copies of Uncle Toms Cabin from some of your acquaintances who have already perused them, I ask this more readily as no one thinks of reading a novel a second time, and I think I could circulate them here to some advantage.

I fear I am encroaching too far on your time — you must not believe me that I dont like writing but I do not like it this long letter notwithstanding. I had almost forgotten to thank you for the Liberty Bells I have long wished to see that periodical, and shall request the bearers of this, to call at the Antislavery office for them. Praying earnestly that the cause in which you are embarked heart and soul may prosper and be ultimately crowned with success as I have no doubt it will be I subscribe myself yours for Liberty Equality Fraternity the world over.

Jane M. Macphail

MS. A. 9. 2. 26. 42